

Draft NEMSAC Process Guide

For Discussion on May 15, 2013

Background

The National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) was formed in April 2007 as a nationally recognized council of EMS representatives and consumers to provide advice and expert recommendations regarding emergency medical services to the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

NEMSAC provides a forum for the developing, considering, and communicating information from a knowledgeable, independent perspective. It provides an opportunity for federal agencies to prioritize needs from the local perspective, and it provides an avenue for the community to comment on critical and pressing EMS issues. Though NEMSAC does not exercise program management, regulatory responsibilities, or decision-making authority, the recommendations and advisories provided by NEMSAC through NHTSA directly affect the programs about which NEMSAC provides advice.

NEMSAC receives its structure and its federal support through the DOT, which is made available through the EMS section of NHTSA.

NHTSA

NHTSA has been a consistent Federal advocate and leader in promoting a systems approach to the development of emergency medical services and systems for more than 40 years. By collaborating with its Federal partners (e.g., the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the U.S. Fire Administration and others), NHTSA has successfully developed national standard curricula for EMS providers, guided the development and implementation of the National EMS Agenda for the Future, spearheaded the initiation of a National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS), and assisted with the deployment of Wireless Enhanced 9-1-1.

NHTSA EMS is one of the premier federal agencies in developing and providing resources for EMS agencies and providers. A foundational basis of NHTSA's method is maintaining the philosophy that, "An efficient EMS system is integral to reducing injury and mortality on and off our Nation's highways, and is key to ensuring prompt emergency response to any type of illness or injury." To accomplish its goals, NHTSA relies on structured methods to assemble national expertise in specialized EMS components—field providers, managers, administrators, physicians, professors, hospital administrators, nurses, citizens, first responders and others.

Consensus building, collaboration, and supporting significant national projects are the hallmarks of NHTSA's contributions to EMS system development. Believing that the Nation's best preparation for any incident, large or small, is a comprehensive EMS system, NHTSA's many contributions reflect those philosophies precisely. Over the past 40 years, NHTSA has partnered with public and private organizations to assess the state of the EMS system and identify critical gaps. The agency has produced comprehensive, evidence-based reports (including the EMS Agenda for the Future, Education Agenda for the Future, and Workforce Agenda for the Future) that serve as the foundation for decisions at the Federal, State, and local levels.

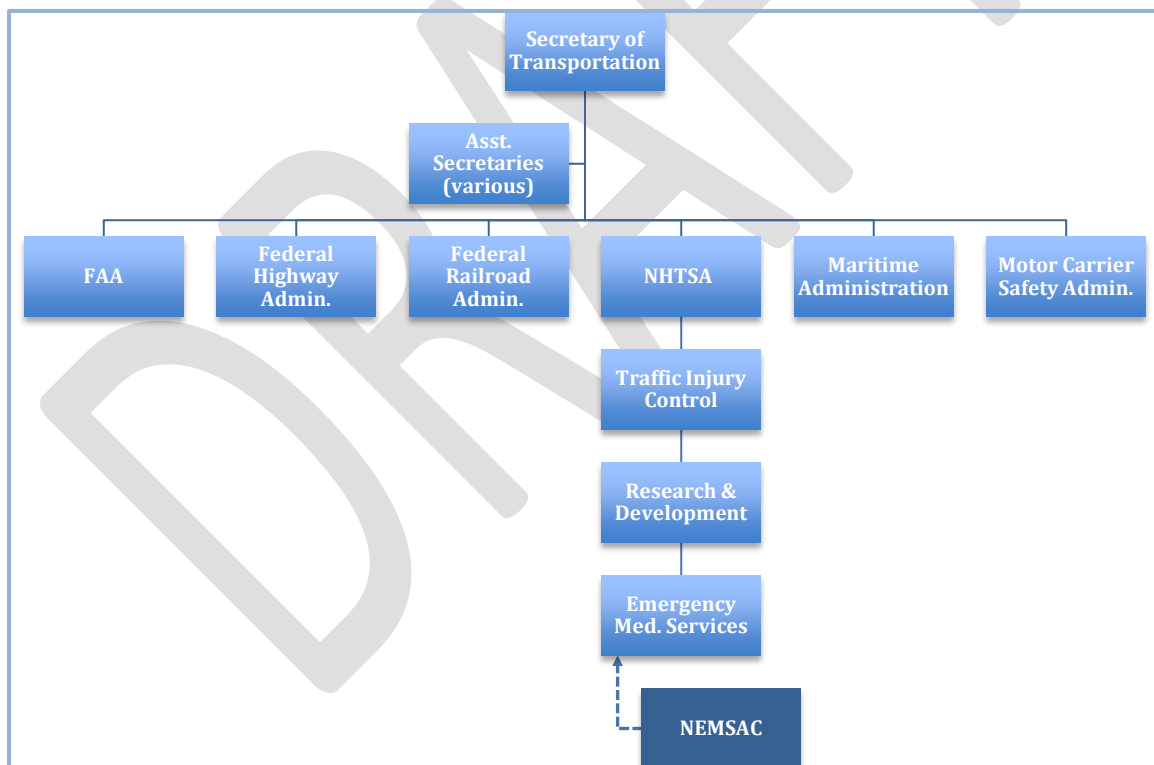
NEMSAC

The National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council was established in 2007 by the Secretary of Transportation to provide information, advice, and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation via the Administrator of NHTSA, and through NHTSA to the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS).

In 2012, NEMSAC was chartered as a statutory committee under House Resolution 4348-352. The law established NEMSAC, provided it a home under the Department of Transportation, established membership requirements, and created requirements for the reporting structure. The statute also provides that the purposes of NEMSAC are to “advise and consult with the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services on matters relating to emergency medical services and the Secretary of Transportation on matters relating to emergency medical services issues affecting the Department of Transportation.”¹

Because the statute requires the DOT to provide administrative support to the Council, the DOT has structured the EMS section of NHTSA to be the administrative arm responsible for NEMSAC. As a result, the Council provides its advice and consultation to FICEMS through the DOT via NHTSA. The figure below shows the relationships between NEMSAC, NHTSA, and DOT.

Figure 1: Organization Chart (abridged) US DOT and NEMSAC’s Role, 2012



FICEMS

The US Department of Transportation Reauthorization, Public Law 109-59 (Section 10202), established the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) in

¹ HR 4348-352. Amendments to Public Law 109-59.

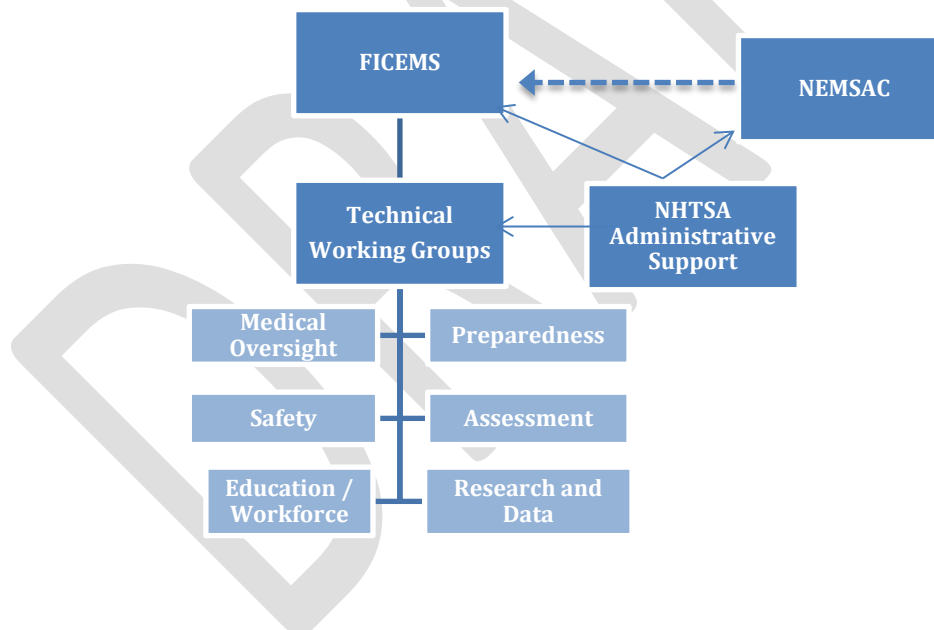
2005² to ensure coordination among Federal agencies involved with State, local, tribal, and regional emergency medical services and 9-1-1 systems.

Multiple Federal agencies make up FICEMS, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Defense, and the Federal Communications Commission. However, the NHTSA Office of EMS in cooperation with DHS and HHS provide administrative support to FICEMS.

FICEMS has assigned a number of technical working groups to address specific details related to EMS and may invite representatives of other federal agencies to provide technical expertise in specific areas of interest to FICEMS. The figure below describes the relationship between FICEMS and NEMSAC, and the role of NHTSA in providing support to FICEMS, NEMSAC, and the technical working groups of FICEMS.

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Figure 2: Inter-relationships between NHTSA, FICEMS, NEMSAC and the FICEMS Working Groups



The importance of NEMSAC to the Federal government is significant. As shown in figures one and two above, NEMSAC's role is important to the Federal government through the recommendations made through the NHTSA reporting structure have the potential to make important improvements to EMS throughout the country—and those improvements are not related to just motor vehicle related incidents but to all types of incidents in the nation. Further,

² See also the Safe, Efficient Accountable Equity Act: a Legacy for Users. (SAFETEA-LU)

the relationship between NEMSAC and FICEMS must not be understated, because FICEMS represents a number of different agencies. As such, recommendations made by NEMSAC to FICEMS have influence with multiple departments in the federal infrastructure.

Recommendation Management

Because of the relationship between NEMSAC, NHTSA, the DOT, FICEMS, and the impact of recommendations and advice given to the federal government through NEMSAC, NHTSA plays an important role in implementing the information provided by NEMSAC. The value proposition, therefore, is how does NHTSA succeed with the maximum (and most important) recommendations implemented for the lowest cost.

Meeting Agenda.

How are items placed on the agenda, based on the needs of NHTSA, the requests of outside agencies, the interests of the Council, and the incremental or revolutionary changes taking place in EMS.

Work of the Council.

This section describes how the Council, by itself or through its committee, accomplishes the goals and strategies of the Council.

Topic Selection.

How does, and how should, the Council select the topics by which to most effectively meet the respective missions of DOT and FICEMS.

Workgroup Selection.

This describes the process by which workgroups (committees) are selected to examine and provide written input on the topic assignments.

Number of people on a workgroup. The Chair will determine the number of people assigned, based on the complexity of the project, the timelines for completion and the relationship of the topic to other topics assigned to this and other workgroups.

Number of workgroups assigned. The Chair will determine the number of workgroups assigned, based on the tasks to be completed, the resources available, and the expediency of the specific projects.

Making assignments. This describes the method of determining who will participate in specific topics and who determines the people assigned to projects.

Prioritizing.

The Chair will determine the priority of projects assigned to the workgroups. Priorities will be evaluated based on DOT and FICEMS priorities, the evaluation of projects by the Council, and the urgency of the projects required by the EMS industry. The prioritizing process will work through all recommendations to prioritize those most important to the Council, DOT, and FICEMS. Public input will also be considered as an important component of the project selection and prioritizing process.

Types of workgroups.

There are three types of workgroups that provide the work and develop the advice on behalf of NEMSAC.

Standing Committees.

Standing committees are part of a structured approach to bring together individual NEMSAC members from multiple disciplines for the purpose of researching issues within a single topic area and to make recommendations for action to the full Council. The intent is to collect data and information in a standardized fashion, and to ensure a standardized format for reporting to the Council. Standing committees may also provide guidance for response to requests from federal agencies or the Administration. Standing Committees include: (1) Safety and Policy, (2) Workforce and Credentialing, (3) Oversight and Research, and (4) Systems and Funding. Standing committees may be created or dissolved by the NEMSAC Chair.

The standing committee will consist of a diverse group of NEMSAC members from a variety of disciplines and settings with expertise in the topic areas. The NEMSAC Chair may appoint non-NEMSAC members for specific time-limited Standing Committee projects.

Ad Hoc Work Groups.

Ad hoc workgroups are time- and topic-limited, providing information to NEMSAC and representing a broad range of stakeholders that have topic expertise. The role of ad-hoc group members is to: (1) Provide technical guidance; (2) provide input on critical information gaps, as well as research methods to address them; (3) provide guidance on draft recommendations; (4) offer scientifically rigorous recommendations for evaluation and validation; (5) provide input on and review of previous NEMSAC or industry work products, or (6) provide a focused and rapid response to questions from administration officials.

The time-limited workgroup may consist of any number of members that may consist of:

- One or more NEMSAC members, one of which will chair the work group
- One or more statisticians or research specialists with measurement or system performance and reporting
- One or more individuals with expertise in the topic area.

In addition, the work group is expected to include representatives from impacted provider sectors and their professional organizations, other stakeholders, consumers and other users, quality improvement organizations, patient safety organization, and public and private payers.

Each work group will have a written charter that will include a mission, scope of work, clearly articulated desired output format, and limitations.

NEMSAC Committee of the Whole.

At the Chair's discretion, the entire Council can sit as a committee of the whole and deliberate specific issues in an informal process prior to advisory council action.

Outputs

Advisories. Advisories are formal documents that discuss specific policy issues or topics of national importance in EMS. Advisories include the most thorough discussion of topics and may

include multiple recommendations. NEMSAC, by statute, provides advice to FICEMS and the Secretary of Transportation. Used when research and additional background is needed to support one or more recommendations.

Draft. Initial document provided by a workgroup to the Council.

Interim. Once the council provides initial approval, the draft remains in interim form until the entire council provides final approval.

Final. The document submitted to the DOT or to FICEMS.

Position Statements. Positions statements are expressions of the council at the time and are usually in response to a particular time-sensitive request. Position statements originate at the council level rather than in committees.

Letters. Letters are typically responses to specific questions arising from FICEMS or DOT. Letters are typically time-sensitive in nature and may be developed in committee or by the council as a whole. Letters are approved by NEMSAC and signed by the chair. Letters are often used for when specific processes and short timeframes are needed.

White Papers. Need a definition here.

Recommendations. Can be stand alone or included as part of each of the outputs.

Figure 3: Components of NEMSAC Work Product

| NEMSAC Outputs | | Public Participation | Origination | Time-Sensitivity | Audience | Scope |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| | Advisories | Two | Committee | No | DOT or FICEMS | Thorough |
| | Position Statements | One or more | Council | Yes | DOT or FICEMS | Brief |
| | Letters | One or more | Council | Yes | One or more Federal Agencies | Brief |
| | White Papers | One or more | Committee | No | Federal Agencies or Industry | Thorough |

Templates.

Templates will be provided for each of the potential outputs described above.

Public participation

Scheduling input. Is there a way for the public to have input with NHTSA or with NEMSAC on the front end, rather than responding to NEMSAC issues.

Document availability. How do we make documents available to the public to provide adequate time to provide input prior to the Council meeting.

Discussion versus decision. Ensure that opportunities are provided for appropriate public discussion is in place prior to a Council decision.

Use of Technology. Can technology be used to improve public outreach.

One versus two-way communication. Streaming video or audio of Council Meetings with or without the ability for distant participants to ask questions during public participation.

Before or after a vote. Ensure that the public has the opportunity to provide input before the Council takes its final vote.

Social Media. Can social media (twitter, Facebook, etc) improve public notification and public input.

Branding. Can processes improve the brand of NEMSAC by establishing recognizable opportunities over time? Branding should be part of the public media discussion.

Planning Cycles.

This part of the process guide should establish a method for designing a multi-year guide that describes expectations, proposed work product, and resource allocation decisions.